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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION N
10/664,567	09/16/2003	William R. Wells	IGTECH.0116P	4585
22434	7590	10/04/2004	EXAMINER	
BEYER WEAVER & THOMAS LLP			HARRISON, JESSICA	
P.O. BOX 778				
BERKELEY, CA 94704-0778			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3714	

DATE MAILED: 10/04/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/664,567	WELLS, WILLIAM R.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Jessica J. Harrison	3714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 September 2003.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 2-10 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 2-10 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/16/2003.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

This application is a continuation of 09/788107, filed 2/16/2001, now abandoned. Applicant's preliminary amendment of 9/16/2003 is acknowledged. Claims 2-10 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 3-7 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Each of dependent claims 3, 4 and 7 are dependent from cancelled claim 1. For examination purposes, dependency from independent claim 2 has been assumed.

Claim 5 presents a question of clarity. Claim 5 refers to 'said gaming device' while multiple game devices have been defined. Further, it recites a control device of the game device is a player tracking controller. This is not seen disclosed and does not seem to be correct. The control device of the game device may be connected (through the network) to a player-tracking controller. This interpretation has been assumed for examination of claim 5.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2,4, 6 and 7 – 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Torango et al. 5,885,158 (hereinafter Tor) in view of Ishida 4,964,638 (hereinafter Ish).

Tor discloses a progressive gaming system configured to run many progressive prizes on one central system and includes at least two gaming devices (106a, 106b) in a gaming device network (110a) which is connected through a host communication device (105a) to at least two other networks (113a, 113b). Network 113a relates to a progressive award system (claim 4). Tor illustrates and teaches the gaming network and game devices to be linked on a loped daisy chain network (5:8), but fails to elaborate as to the details of the physical links as to type of connection wire and packet transmitter/receivers. Token ring network arrangements are generally known to transmit packets, or a token, to each machine in the loop to indicate as the method of data transmission management. In looking to implement this token ring network in a casino environment, one of ordinary skill in the art would encounter Ishida's teachings. Ish discloses a networked communications arrangement of looped communications for slot machines which also represents a token ring network. Transmitting and receiving cables 10a and 10b are made of optical fiber cables, and the ends are held by first and second

physical connections (4:5-10). Figure 10 of Ish shows an automatic detection in case the communication is partially interrupted. Upon this detection, the same data request messages are transmitted in a reverse direction in the looped communication circuit. In this way, even if a cable disconnection occurs, communication with the rest of the machines may continue (8: 28- 62). Clearly this bi-directional communication ability provides advantages over a one directional loop arrangement. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to implement the token passing ring arrangement of Tor with optical fiber cables as taught by Ish in order to provide a bi-directional communications loop in increase the integrity of the network in the event of a device or cable fault in the network. Keeping as many machines operable on a network is highly desirable in an environment where the business bottom line depends upon machine operability, and using the network suggested by Ishida clearly fulfills that need. Regarding claim 4, 6 and 7 these features are present and obvious in the combination outlined above.

Claims 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Torango et al. 5,885,158 (hereinafter Tor) in view of Ishida 4,964,638 (hereinafter Ish) as applied to claim 2 above, and further in view of Boushy 6,183,362 (hereinafter Bou). The combination of Tor and Ish fail to explicitly state further connection of the network to a player tracking system. Tor does allude to the possibility at 5:18 where he states a the controller 105

may be coupled to a casino token ring network to provide information to a plurality of [other] computers for various purposes such as ...club booth.

Common meaning in the art at the time of Torango of 'club booth' encompasses player-tracking club, suggesting Tor contemplated the possibility of use with a player tracking system. Boushy has been cited for elaborating on the state of the art comparable to Tor regarding casino networks and player tracking systems. Bou discloses a system and method for implementing a customer tracking and recognition database that encompasses customers' gaming and non-gaming activity. Within a casino, a network of game machines (slots 130) are connected via token ring LAN to various other networks including a player tracking controller/database 112 and CMS 234. This arrangement provides for personalized customer services and complementary rewards for play, which as is widely known, enhances the players experience and ultimately the casino's bottom line. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to link the Tor in view of Ish system to a player tracking system such as that taught by Bou, in order to provide players with a player tracking club which in turn would enhances the players experience and ultimately the casino's bottom line.

Conclusion

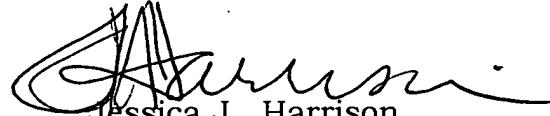
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Cited to the record is a paper version of a presentation made to the North American Gaming Regulators Association in

May 2000 by a SSO named at the time GAMMA. One of the goals of GAMMA, now known as GSA, was to standardize the links of communications within and between gaming devices and networks so that different manufactures systems can communicate and operate together as well as allow networks to communicate information. The nature of applicant's invention is similar to what GAMMA proposes as the C-link standard. Systems connectivity standards were under development, with goals of the standards discussed in the presentation. At the physical layer, Ethernet, ATM and other IP mechanisms were under consideration. A copy of IEEE 1394, or FIREWIRE, is also included to the record. The goals of GAMMA regarding connectivity appear readily met by use of the IEEE standard. It is also noted that the assignee of the instant invention is listed as a participating member of GAMMA.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jessica J. Harrison whose telephone number is 703-308-2217. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F during business hours.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Derris Banks can be reached on 703-308-1745. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Jessica J. Harrison
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3714

jjh